61. A. Raubitschek, 'Theseus at the Isthmos', in M. del Chiaro, ed., *Corinthiaca, studies in honor of Darrell A. Amyx* (1986) 1-2.

62. E. Vermeule, V. Karageorghis, *Mycenaean pictorial vase-painting* (1982) V. 28-34, 36; IX.17, 18; XI.2, 19.1; E. Rystedt, 'The footrace and other athletic contests in the Mycenaean world', *OpAth* 16 (1986) 103-16.

63. C. Belger, 'Erbauung und Zerstörung des mykenischen Plattenringes', *JdI* 10 (1895) 114-27, esp. 124-5; Chr. Tsountas, 'Zu einigen mykenischen Streitfragen', *ibid.* 143-51, esp. 151.

64. Note 31 above.

65. M. Robertson, 'The Antimenes Painter: a scene from the Theban story', lecture delivered in London, 1985, to honour Sir John Beazley, 14-17.

66. Vermeule (n. 62 above) XI.5, 6, 37, and see n. 76 below.

67. Ruijgh (n. 3 above) 149-52.

68. W. S. Smith, *Interconnections in the ancient Near East* (1965) 148-52, figs. 13-15.

69. B. Jaroš-Deckert, *Grabung im Asasif* 1963-70, *Das Grab des Jnj-jtj.f* (1975) pls. 1, 3.

70. W. Heurtley, 'The grave stelai', *BSA* 25 (1921-23) 126-46, fig. 30 (stelai 8, 9); K. Bittel, 'Tonschale mit Ritzzeichnung von Boğazköy', *RevArch* 1976, 9-14, figs. 2-3.

71. Note 42 above.

72. Eur. *Supp.* 990-1071; Hyg. *fab.* 242.

73. Paus. 9.8.3, 19.4 (Amphiaraos), 9.182 (Melanippos or Tydeus), 9.18.3 (children of Oidipous), 9.18.6 (Asphodikos), 9.19.2 (Epigonoi), 9.25.1 (Menoikios).

74. T. Spyropoulos, *Deltion* 1972, 309-12, pls. 251-6; 1973, 252-8; S. Symeonoglou, *The topography of Thebes* (1985) 305, site 254; cremation, 60.

75. M. J. Mellink, *AJA* 89 (1985) 558, 91 (1987) 13.

76. Symeonoglou (above n. 74) Site 3, 40, 230-1; K. Demakopoulou, D. Konsola, *Archaeological Museum of Thebes* (1981) 54-5.

77. Demakopoulou, Konsola, *ibid.* pls. 12-27.

78. Bittel (above n. 70); the later type, e.g., M. Lang, *Palace of Nestor* II (1969) pl. 123.

79. Demakopoulo, Konsola, *op. cit.* 49.

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THE ELEGIAC WOMAN AT ROME[1]

How do women enter the discourse of Augustan love poetry and become elegiac? Studies of the representation of women in antiquity generally suggest that women enter its literatures doubly determined. Broadly speaking, literary representations of the female are determined both at the level of culture and at the level of genre: that is to say by the range of cultural codes and institutions which order the female in a particular society and by the conventions which surround a particular practice of writing.[2] I propose in this paper, therefore, to explore the place of the elegiac woman in the literary landscape of Augustan Rome through an examination of the interplay of her cultural and generic determinants. The phrase 'the elegiac woman' which appears in the title of this paper should make clear at the outset that my concern will be not with the realities of women's lives in Augustan society but with a poetic genre of the female.

Among the Augustan elegists themselves the practice of writing elegies is so closely identified with one particular type of woman that when the genres of Elegy and Tragedy are personified, they are clearly differentiated as respectively mistress and matron.[3] The most familiar elegiac woman is, therefore, the mistress: the Propertian Cynthia, the Tibullan Delia and Nemesis, the Ovidian Corinna. But the figure of the mistress is by no means the exclusive shape which the elegiac woman takes. So, in order to encompass within a single paper the broad spectrum of female types which the elegiac woman embraces, I propose to focus on that book of the elegiac corpus which displays the greatest diversity of female subjects: namely the fourth book of the Propertian oeuvre in which we find not just a mistress, but also a wife, a Vestal Virgin, a witch and a mother.

Perhaps the first questions we should ask about the fourth book of Propertian elegies are: how are we to account for this diversity? and what relation do these female figures have to the Cynthia who no longer holds stage centre? At least one critic has attempted to put the familiar figure of the mistress back into the centre of the fourth book's fictive world, by arguing that new figures appear only to be contrasted unfavourably with her. Then, surrounded by apparently more conventional female types, the Propertian Cynthia is read as triumphing over more orthodox assessments of a woman's worth.[4] Such a reading of the relations between the fourth book's female subjects seems, however, highly unsatisfactory. For the elegiac mistress Cynthia is not an interpretative key, a narrative pivot, of the fourth or even the third Propertian poetry-books.

Already the third book of the Propertian corpus presents as its starting-point and inspiration not an elegiac mistress but the Hellenistic poets Callimachus and Philitas, and it only employs the title 'Cynthia' towards its close in poetic declarations of desertion or dismissal. Within that narrative framework, the third book broadens the range of Propertian elegy and extends the compass of its elegiac woman beyond a subjugating Cynthia to include, for example, a loving wife abandoned at Rome by her campaigning husband (3.12). A single narrative viewpoint steadies apparent fluctuations between public and private, personal and political, themes which the expanded poetic range engenders. However the first-person, authorial narrator speaks now not as Cynthia's lover in particular but simply as a lover, or even a spokesman for other lovers, at Rome. The key to this poetry-book, it is generally recognized, lies not in the amatory idioms of love for Cynthia, but in the publication of Horace's first three books of *Odes*. The third book of the Propertian corpus does not pivot round Cynthia but around Callimachus and Horace, offering a playful and an appropriately elegiac response to the postures of recent lyric verse.[5]

Similarly the elegiac mistress does not provide a key to the diversity of styles and female subjects which the last book of the Propertian corpus incorporates. The first poem of the first poetry-book appears to evoke the beginning of an affair, the last poems of the third book to draw that affair to a close. Poem 1.1 begins Cynthia's role as the dominant subject of elegiac discourse, poems 3.24 and 25 seem to conclude it. A cycle of allusions signalling a narrative progression from erotic madness to celibate wisdom shapes the first three books into a poetic unit and effectively marks off any subsequent book of elegies as a significant departure from what was once Cynthia-centred discourse.[6]

Appearing some years after the sequence of three books and rendered additionally distinct by the greater length of its elegies, the fourth book begins with an announcement of new themes: rites, festivals and the ancient names of places (4.1.69). This announcement suggests that the boundaries of Propertian discourse will be extended even beyond those drawn in the third book of the corpus. For now Rome, and specifically its presentation in *Aeneid* 8, are taken as the starting-point for renewed poetic production. Callimachus continues to be claimed as advocate of elegiac over epic writing-practices and as model for linguistic delicacy and polish, but now he is also appropriated to signal not further writings of a love poet but the writing of Rome itself. An authorial narrator suggests that this next book of elegies will commemorate the city not in Ennian epic but in a Romanized version of Callimachean aetiology – a genre able to accommodate comfortably the narratives of Rome's history and Caesar's weaponry which poem 4.1 appears to initiate but which the earlier Propertian poetry-books generally eschewed, deferred or even condemned.

However, this is not the only announcement of a poetics with which the fourth book begins. For poem 4.1 has a bipartite structure. A second speaker, the astrologer Horos, intervenes just as the authorial narrator is setting out the ambitious goals – the construction of an elegiac counterpart to Virgilian Rome – towards which his race-horse of poetry must charge (4.1.69-70). Answering the earlier narrative of Rome's glorious Trojan origins with more tragic perspectives on Roman warfare and Troy's fall, and offering instead an idiosyncratic reminder of the poet's previous career as a love elegist, Horos demands a return to the familiar amatory idioms of the earliest books – to poems about servitude under a single mistress.

Women feature predominantly in the second section of the poem, forming part of the advocacy of stylistic moderation and a qualification of the earlier account of Rome's glorious history. A mother's grief for the loss of her sons in battle undercuts the earlier depiction of Rome's grandeur (4.1.89-98), the slaughter of a young girl and the rape of a prophetess interpose a more critical view of the Trojan war (4.1.109-18), and the familiar figure of the mistress appears as part of an erotic military service with which Horos believes the poet would be better occupied (4.1.135-40). We might therefore anticipate that in the fourth book female subjects will be more likely to implement the second rather than the first poetic programme.

So the novel, bipartite design of the first poem offers two conflicting programmes for the fourth book, but because the authorial narrator offers no response to the interventions of the second, it is not immediately clear which – if either – form of elegiac writing will be undertaken.[7] The poems which follow fluctuate between the two poles of aetiological and amatory elegy established by the initial, dramatic clash between poetic programmes. But, whereas a narrative thread of eroticism binds together the disparate materials of the third book, no overarching authorial voice, no unifying lover's perspective, appears to bind together the poems of the fourth book. In book 3, for example, the battle of Actium enters Propertian elegy as part of the authorial narrator's explanation of his erotic servitude (3.11), and is enclosed by poems which offer the elegiac lover's views on the occasion of his beloved's birthday (3.10) and a husband's desertion of his loyal wife (3.12).[8] In book 4, Actium now enters elegiac discourse in the absence of any immediate amatory context, as part of a priestly poet's aetion of Apollo's Palatine temple (4.6). And even the poems which surround it are dominated not by the voice of an authorial lover, but by the voices of a madam (4.5) and a mistress (4.7).[9]

Faced with a book where the unifying viewpoint of a lover is not threaded through its disparate poems, where an authorial lover scarcely appears as a central character even in the amatory elegies, and which begins with an unresolved conflict between the poetics of *Roma* and *amor*, there is no justification for reading Cynthia and Cynthia-centred eroticism as still dominating its discourse.

How, then, can we account for the diversity of the fourth book and the range of its female forms? So apparent is the heterogeneity of this book that it has been thought to constitute a posthumous work which an editor patched together out of the unpublished poems of the late Propertius.[10] Less drastically, the book has been thought to comprise fragments of an unfinished collection of Roman aetia which Propertius subsequently padded out with miscellaneous amatory pieces and published with a suitably hybrid introduction.[11] Particularly since the 1950s, however, the body of scholarship attesting to the essential cohesiveness of the fourth book has steadily grown. Many critics argue that the diversity manifested by Propertius' fourth book does not constitute an unfortunate afterthought but, rather, its central dynamic – its poetic project. The bipartite structure of poem 4.1 then establishes the interchange between aetiological and amatory themes as a poetic principle operative in the rhythm of an elegiac poetry-book. Superficially, the subsequent elegies leading up to and including poem 4.6 alternate between the aetiological (2, 4, 6) and amatory (3, 5) categories, while those leading up to the last poem form amatory (7, 8) and aetiological (9, 10) pairs. But cross-references and overlaps abound between the poems located in these supposedly rigid classifications, until the book closes with a poem (4.11) which seems to belong simultaneously to neither and to both categories. Such studies suggest strongly that the last book of the Propertian corpus forms a coherent whole, that it sets out a poetics of polarity with which its subsequent poems and, therefore, its female subjects are constantly engaged.[12]

Poem 4.2 also offers lessons on how to read the fourth book's diverse female figures. Here a new first-person narrator, the statue Vertumnus, tells us that he contains many shapes in his one body (4.2.1) and that whatever shape he becomes, whether man or woman, he is still *decorus* (4.2.22). In a number of ways, the text itself encourages its readers to interpret the statue's declarations as yet another programme for and justification of the diversity of the fourth Propertian poetry-book. For example, the changeful yet singular statue may act as symbol of a changeful yet unified Propertian book because several of the *shapes* into which Vertumnus boasts that he can turn also form past and present *subjects* of Propertian poetry. The Iacchus (or Bacchus) and Apollo which Vertumnus becomes (4.2.31-2) feature together as inspirers of Propertian verse towards the beginning of the third book (3.2.9), and are hymned respectively in poems 3.17 and 4.6. More significantly, the very first transformation for which Vertumnus playfully professes a capacity – surprisingly for a bronze statue he can become a soft girl in silks (4.2.23) – recalls the characteristics of the elegiac mistress Cynthia and the amatory idioms of the earliest Propertian poetry-books (1.2.1-6, 2.1.1-16).

Identifiable in places with forms of Propertian discourse, associated explicitly with the poem in which it gains a voice (4.2.57), described as a finely crafted work of art (4.2.59-64), this statue's proclamation of its tasteful transformations may

thus be read as an instrument for the expression of a playful poetics of metamorphosis:

> opportuna mea est cunctis natura figuris:
> in quamcumque uoles uerte, decorus ero. (4.2.21-2)[13]

By the time we reach poem 4.3 where we find the first-person narrator has been transformed again into a young bride, it becomes clear that the range of women who speak in the fourth book also forms part of the Propertian poetic project. They contribute to an innovatory, bipolar poetics, a programme comprising surprising and sometimes playful transformations of narrative voice and a range of elegiac tones which oscillates between the aetiological and the amatory, the public and the private, the grand and the sorrowful.

(i) Arethusa

The first poem of the book to place a woman on the elegiac map of Rome is structured as if it were in fact a woman's work. For, in its entirety, poem 4.3 presents itself as a love letter composed at Rome by a female, rather than a male, lover. And in keeping with the poetic project of diversification, the new elegiac narrator 'Arethusa' does not even speak as a mistress but as a wife.

Earlier Propertian poetry-books were written predominantly in an autobiographical mode which appeared to confide to readers a poet's confession of love for a woman who was not his wife. The male authorial narrator preferred death to marriage (2.7.7-12).[14] His beloved Cynthia was depicted as transcending the simple categories of wife and mistress (2.6.41-2) and was even cast occasionally in the role of a novel Lucretia who spins when abandoned by her lover (3.6.15-18).[15] However the new elegiac narrator Arethusa speaks in praise of married love (4.3.49) and restores to herself as faithful wife the rightful role of a loyal Lucretia who spins while awaiting her husband's return from war (4.3.33).[16] Wool-making is now associated familiarly with the chastity of a *matrona* not, paradoxically, with the enforced continence of a *meretrix*. In poem 4.3 the elegiac woman as loyal wife appears to match an ideal of Roman womanhood evoked throughout the Augustan Age in many epitaphs and even, according to Suetonius, in the household of the Princeps himself.[17] So the common elegiac idiom of a lover's slavery to his beloved is replaced in poem 4.3 by the less provocative picture of a husband's conquest of his wife: Arethusa recalls her sexual surrender on her wedding-night (4.3.11-12).[18]

The elegiac narrator Arethusa is also distinguished from the narrative first-person, the 'I', of earlier Propertian poems by her loyalty to her soldier-husband. In Propertius' first book the male elegiac narrator declines an invitation to leave Rome with the soldier Tullus and describes himself as already occupied in the military service of love (1.6.29-30). In subsequent books the metaphor of *militia*

amoris continues to be employed as a means for rejecting warfare and the composition of epic poems on military themes: it is in his girl-friend's camp that the lover parades (2.7.15-16) and it is with her that he fights his battles (3.5.1-2).[19] In the third book, the narrative first-person expresses surprise that Postumus was able to abandon his wife Galla in the pursuit of Augustan standards, associates the despoiling of Parthia with greed, and expresses the wish that all those who prefer weapons to bed may perish (3.12.1-6). Arethusa, however, studies maps of the terrain her husband Lycotas will cover in his campaigns and longs to join him in camp. She wants to become loyal luggage in his military expeditions (4.3.35-48). So in keeping with the grandiose plans expressed at the beginning of the fourth book, Arethusa's letter seems to change the old poetic idioms and to enlarge even further the dimensions of the Propertian practice of elegiac writing.

The adoption of such a female voice in the Propertian corpus also seems to reinstate the conventional opposition between male and female spheres of activity which epic poetry had exploited and earlier Propertian poems had undermined. The topography of epic generally places women within the city and men outside on the battlefield. In the *Iliad*, the gates of Troy separate the women's world of spinning and weaving inside from the men's world of war outside.[20] But in the erotic discourse of the earlier Propertian poems that separation of male from female was subverted by the position of the authorial narrator. In the third poetry-book, for example, the male lover stays within the gates of Rome encouraging the soldiers of Augustus to depart or observing their return from the vantage point of his mistress' embrace (3.4). The model for male behaviour which book 3 holds up is not a Hector who leaves the city to engage in battle but the unheroic Paris who wages war only in Helen's lap (3.8.29-32). Now, in poem 4.3, it is only the woman who stays within the city, the man fulfils the role the state requires of him – at war, abroad, implementing Augustus' frontier policy.[21]

However there is still a fundamental generic difference between epic narratives and this new elegiac account of male and female roles. Composed in the form of a woman's letter sent from Rome to a soldier-husband abroad, poem 4.3 locates Arethusa at the centre of the elegiac world and warfare on its periphery. The elegiac poem does follow general epic practice when it places the woman at home and the man away at war: in *Aeneid* 8 (the conversion of which into elegy had been the initial poetic programme of Propertius' fourth book) the men march away from Evander's little city while the mothers watch fearfully from the walls.[22] But, unlike *Aeneid* 8, the city walls are the limits of the elegiac world and the poem's structure does not permit it to narrate directly the deeds of Lycotas on campaign. The elegaic letter stays within a woman's world at Rome where any engagement in battles to maintain the frontiers of the Roman empire is merely a mark of absence.

If a lyric narrative of Augustan campaigns is compared with this elegiac treatment, it further demonstrates how the strategy of producing a wife's letter

permits Propertius to fulfil a part of the programme of the fourth poetry-book – to look beyond the earlier more private limits of erotic elegy to public Roman themes, and yet to draw back from the more grandiose possibilities. Traditionally it was the thanksgiving of a faithful wife rather than the spectatorship of the disinterested elegiac lover which signalled the soldier's return, the achievement of victory and peace. So, in Horace, *Odes* 3.14.5-10, a chaste Livia who rejoices in a single husband is encouraged to offer sacrifice and to join a procession of women giving thanks for the safe return of Augustus from his victories in Spain. Similarly, the elegiac poem 4.3 does not close with a male narrator's promising to applaud an army's return while disengaging himself from its activities, but with a female narrator praying for a triumph for her husband as a result of Parthian conquests and declaring that she will dedicate his weapons in gratitude at the gate through which he safely returns (4.3.63-72).

But although approximately parallel roles are provided for Livia and for Arethusa, there are again significant generic differences between the elegiac and the lyric perspectives generated by the narrative strategy of a woman's letter. The ode places Augustus' military prowess in a public context by beginning with the unique vocative *o plebs* and, in his role as public rather than sympotic poet, the Horatian narrator declares the occasion of Augustus' return to be a joyful one for him.[23] The elegiac poem when shaped as a wife's private letter finds no place for authorial comments on military matters, for public addresses, or even for Augustus, because this first-person narrator is concerned exclusively with the activities of a single soldier in whom she expresses an erotic interest.

The elegiac letter thus transforms elements of the ideology of woman into the literary effects required by the conventions of the genre and the project of a Propertian poetry-book. The process whereby the faithful wife who waits for her soldier-husband's return is transformed into an elegiac woman and the implications of that process for readings of Propertian discourse can be elucidated if two Augustan versions of the loyal Lucretia are compared. In Augustan historiography, in Livy's prose account of Rome's beginnings, Lucretia spins at home while her husband besieges Ardea. The depiction of her *pudicitia* operates as a moral foil to the depravity of her assailant. The violation of her chastity is then presented as precipitating the fall of the kings and thus opens up the pathway to the political freedom of the early Republic. For that purpose it is sufficient to depict Lucretia briefly, spinning within the house.[24] When, however, Lucretia later enters the discourse of Ovid's *Fasti* and becomes an elegiac woman (2.741-60) her conduct as she awaits her husband's return is described in more detail and she takes on some features which parallel and recall those of the Propertian Arethusa. She inquires after the battle which occupies her husband, but calls the besieged city *improba* for keeping him away. He is rash to risk his life in war, while it is she, not her soldier, who is 'dying' of despair. Thus, on entry

into an elegiac genre, the woman's perspective is enlarged and in her loneliness at home warfare becomes not a glorious but a sorrowful thing.

The account of militarism which the elegiac Lucretia thus provides leads to the devaluing of her soldier-husband's activities. Similarly, as another faithful wife left at home while her husband is away at war, the first-person narrator, the elegiac 'I', of the Propertian poem 4.3 also gives voice to a devaluation of war.

As poem 4.3 progresses, warfare is increasingly associated with the erotic and subordinated to erotic concerns which recall the discourse of earlier elegiac poems. The absence of the soldier-husband which war necessitates occasions an outburst against the inventor of war (4.3.19-22) such as had already issued from the mouth of the male lover forced to abandon his beloved and leave for war in earlier Tibullan elegy.[25] The soldier, from his loving wife's viewpoint, is unwarlike and delicate (4.3.23-4) like the delicate mistresses of earlier erotic discourse.[26] Here war wounds are mistaken for or preferred to the marks of sexual encounters with others (4.3.25-8). In earlier elegiac eroticism, however, the marks of sexual encounters had demonstrated the militancy of love.[27] At home, in Rome, weapons are kissed rather than carried and uniforms are woven rather than worn (4.3.30 and 33). Arethusa learns about Augustan campaigns and the geography of the Roman Empire ultimately only to ascertain when Lycotas will be coming home (4.3.35-40). Finally, at the close of the poem, Arethusa's prayer that her husband will return and obtain a triumph is grammatically dependent on his sexual fidelity while abroad (4.3.67-70).

In earlier elegy the narrative of an attachment to a mistress differentiated the authorial narrator from the soldier and, presented as an engagement in erotic warfare, aided the rejection of militarism and epic poems on military themes. In poem 4.3, instead of the old elegiac metaphor of the soldiery of love undertaken by the male narrator, we find the female narrator's love of the soldier – not so much *militia amoris* as *amor militis*. The effect, however, is similar. The ideological alignment of the loyal wife with the domestic can be utilized to glorify or to denigrate war. In Arethusa's letter, where war is observed exclusively from the domestic setting, eroticism still holds greater value than militancy.

So, while Arethusa constitutes a new female narrator in the Propertian corpus, she is nonetheless provided with some of the attitudes of the earlier male narrators.[28] And she is even provided with some of their attributes. For when she presents herself as a lonely lover enduring bitter nights of separation (4.3.29) she takes on the condition of the *exclusus amator* of the very first Propertian poem who endures bitter nights when excluded by Cynthia (1.1.33).[29] Therefore, in the very first transformation which follows on from the many shapes of Vertumnus, Propertius takes on the character of the faithful wife Arethusa and she, paradoxically, takes on the character of the earlier Propertian narrator.

But this transformation does not lead us right back into the world of the earlier poetry-books. In poem 3.12 war had already been presented as entailing the perversion of Roman marriage and the desolation of the abandoned wife. But there the reader was offered an apparently authorial viewpoint: a poet's critique of military matters.[30] In the fourth poetry-book the narrative device of a single elegiac epistle not only comfortably accommodates the limitations of elegiac interest in military matters, it also precludes any close identification of the first-person narrative voice with the viewpoint of an elegiac poet.

The employment of Greek names for the husband, the wife, and even the wife's dog, does not encourage any easy identification of the scenario envisaged in the letter with particular events at Rome to which the poet Propertius might have been privy. Some critics do read Arethusa and Lycotas as pseudonyms and look elsewhere in the corpus for the Roman characters which these names are thought to disguise.[31] But the name *Arethusa* is itself highly appropriate for a narrator of the fourth book's changeful discourse. For just like the preceding narrator, the god Vertumnus, the nymph Arethusa possesses her own story of metamorphosis from woman into fountain. Moreover, in Virgil's *Eclogues* she had been employed as a symbol of a writing-practice which introduced the elegist Gallus into a pastoral landscape. Heading a pastoral poem which narrates an elegiac lover's complaints about his absent mistress, Arethusa had already been associated with the amatory idioms of elegiac writing.[32]

The elegiac epistle, the free-standing fictional love letter in verse, appears itself to be a new genre in Latin literature.[33] So Arethusa writes a letter because an elegiac epistle suits the innovatory approach of a Roman Callimachus interested in new practices of elegiac writing.[34] Furthermore in a letter the first-person is not presented directly. We are not asked to imagine an Arethusa addressing her Lycotas face-to-face. Instead, through explicit references to the physical processes of writing and reading we encounter a woman who has been written into an elegiac letter and who asks to be read.[35] So in poem 4.3 Propertius is not expressing sympathetically a woman's reaction to loneliness, nor reflecting on the general plight of Augustan womanhood,[36] but rather taking on a cultural classification of woman and shaping it to suit the generic limitations and the poetic designs of his fourth book of elegies. And, most significantly, the very first elegiac woman he brings into his discourse is explicitly constructed as a form of writing.

(ii) Tarpeia

The next poem to place a woman in the centre of the elegiac map of Rome also seems to position its discourse ambiguously between grand ambitions to commemorate the city and the stylistic limitations subsequently recommended in the bipartite poetics of the fourth book.

The elegiac Arethusa constituted a significant departure from the female figure of early Propertian discourse – the beloved Cynthia. But the elegiac Tarpeia is even further removed from the mistress of previous books. For, unlike Arethusa,

Tarpeia has a public role and plays an important part in the history of the city. By recounting the legend of the vestal virgin who betrayed Rome's citadel on the very anniversary of the city's birth, poem 4.4 seems to take up the initial ambitious proposal of the fourth book – to match Virgilian Rome with an elegiac counterpart. So the poem even opens in a grand Ennian manner[37] and proceeds to expound on themes already envisaged in the topographical survey with which the whole book began: the Tarpeian hill on which father Jupiter dwells (4.1.7), the feast-day celebrating the foundation of Rome (4.1.19-20) and the role of the Sabine king Tatius in forming the three tribes of the Roman race (4.1.29-32).

Explaining the origin of an old name for the Capitoline hill is an appropriate task for the poet who began his fourth book with the aetiology of Rome, promised to sing the ancient names of places and explicitly declared himself to be the Roman Callimachus, the elegiac narrator of origins.[38] Furthermore, since poem 4.4 takes as its subject a site which was pointed out to Virgil's epic hero in *Aeneid* 8,[39] the poem also follows up the initial implicit proposal of the Propertian poetry-book to bring Virgilian epic within elegy's terms. As the Virgilian Evander once showed to Aeneas the dwelling place of Jupiter on the Tarpeian hill, so Propertius tells his readers how the hill got its name from Tarpeia's betrayal of it. And in his role as public poet, as the poet of Rome's destiny, the narrator of 4.4 makes it clear right from the start that his elegiac version of the Tarpeia legend still makes of her a detestable traitress.[40] This particular elegiac lover, we are told, is an evil girl (4.4.17).

Undisturbed by the focus in the poem on an act of betrayal rather than a moment of triumph in Rome's history, those few modern critics who read the fourth book as giving literary consecration to and a poetic justification of Augustus' acts, have observed that the Caesars claimed descent from the Sabine king. Accordingly they read the narrative of Tarpeia's treachery as a commemoration of Rome and Augustus because her treachery led ultimately to the happy union of the Sabine and Roman peoples.[41]

But, since literary meaning is constructed for Propertian poems through the process of establishing a similarity and difference in relation to other texts, a comparison of the elegiac Tarpeia with the Tarpeia of Augustan historiography proves instructive. The elegiac Tarpeia expresses the belief that she has the capacity to release forces engaged in battle (4.4.59-62). In Livy's version of events, however, it is the abducted Sabine women who actually part the hostile forces, who plead with their Sabine brothers and Roman husbands to agree terms and make a single state out of two peoples. Livy tells Tarpeia's story briefly and baldly, and the story serves only to explain how the Sabine soldiers gained access to the citadel. It is the Sabine women, not Tarpeia, who bring this episode in Romulus' reign to a glorious close, and not before Romulus' prowess in battle has been described in glowing epic colours (1.9-13).[42]

To enter the discourse of Propertius' fourth book and become an elegiac woman, Tarpeia's story is rewritten. Roman legend now takes on elegiac tones. Tarpeia's treachery constitutes a Roman version of a myth common in the Graeco-Roman world: a girl, usually the daughter of the king, betrays her besieged city either for gold or for love of the besieger.[43] The Tarpeia of Livy's narrative betrays Rome for gold, and the motive of greed for gold is the accepted version of events in Roman historiography.[44] The elegiac Tarpeia betrays Rome out of desire for the opposing general. In articulating her dilemma, her choice between civic duty and love, between the city and her beloved, the Propertian Tarpeia places herself in the tradition of Greek heroines: she claims to understand the choice made by a Scylla or an Ariadne (4.4.39-42). In this way the text itself brings to its readers' attention the elegiac Tarpeia's debt to earlier Hellenistic forms of erotic writing. Callimachus may have written about Scylla in the *Aetia*.[45] Several heroines of this type appear in the writings of Parthenius.[46] Since Plutarch cites an undated version of the Tarpeia legend composed in Greek elegiacs in which she betrays the citadel to Gauls out of love for their leader, it is not clear whether Propertius is the originator of Tarpeia's romantic dimensions. But what is clear is that the elegiac Tarpeia is shaped according to Alexandrian conventions.[47]

Once again a fundamental generic difference between forms of written women is disclosed. Composed according to Hellenistic conventions, poem 4.4 places Tarpeia at the centre of the elegiac world and warfare on its periphery. Narrative of action is compressed, direct speech is extended. Thus considerable space – almost half the elegiac poem – is dedicated to the female subject's point of view. The battles between Roman and Sabine, the prowess of Romulus which figured in Livy's connected narrative have no part to play in such verse. Propertian elegy is discontinuous and fragmentary:[48] the limits of an aetiological poem are Tarpeia's punishment and the allocation of her name to the Capitoline hill.

Similarly, there is no place in the discourse of poem 4.4 for the theme of successful reconciliation, the union of two peoples for the greater glory of Rome. In the conceptual framework, the familial ideology, of Roman society the female is structured as both necessary to its continuity and as disruptive of it.[49] Women are conceived to be subject to conflicting allegiances. On the mythic plane such an ambivalent position is expressed as either a force for disruption or for reconciliation. So, in Roman legend and Augustan historiography, the abducted Sabine women bring together two races by reconciling their fathers and their husbands. Tarpeia, however, is the other side of the dichotomy: the woman whose desire for a husband leads to the betrayal of her fatherland (4.4.87-8), her dowry is Rome (4.4.56). The elegiac narrative not only focuses on woman as agent of disruption, it also underlines the perversity of Tarpeia's deed when it retains the Varronian tradition which made of Tarpeia a vestal virgin.[50] Historically, sexual activity on the part of a Vestal might be linked with a crisis in the state.[51] The flame she was

required to tend symbolized the survival of Rome, yet in the Propertian poem that flame has been extinguished (4.4.45-6).

A similar differentiation between women as agents of political disruption or reconciliation can be seen to operate in the epic narrative of the *Aeneid*. The book which is dominated by the figure of Dido opens with the hope that from union with Aeneas will arise a great kingdom (4.47-9) but closes with a curse requiring that there be not peace but endless war between their two peoples (4.622-9). As an agent of political disruption, the elegiac Tarpeia is portrayed in a manner which recalls Dido's predicament – both are torn between civic duty and love. Several verbal echoes then reinforce the bond between these two female figures.[52]

But, although Tarpeia is provided with a role which parallels approximately that of Dido, there are also significant differences between the elegiac and epic narratives generated by the limitations of aetiological poetry. Dido is a central character only for the space of the *Aeneid*'s fourth book. The conventions of epic require that attention be returned to the hero Aeneas and his mission to found the Roman race. Later in the epic we briefly meet Lavinia, the agent of political reconciliation. Initiating the second half of the *Aeneid*, an oracle discloses that Lavinia's union with a foreigner will breed a Latin race so potent as to achieve worldwide dominion (7.45-106). The Propertian aetion, however, is completed by the death of Tarpeia. Effectively the elegy does not look forward beyond the bounds of the *Aeneid*'s fourth book, and thus a redefinition of the Propertian poetics seems to have been reached – now it is not so much Virgilian *Roma* as Virgilian *amor* with which the elegiac poem takes issue.

Once again contemporary ideologies of woman are seen to be transformed into the effects required by the conventions of a particular form of writing and by the project of a particular literary discourse. For the production of an elegiac Tarpeia places poem 4.4 ambiguously between the two conflicting proposals for elegiac writing set out in the first poem of the fourth book. Although the initial section of the opening poem surveys Jupiter's dwelling place, the celebrations of Rome's foundations, and the role of the Sabines in the formation of the Roman people, poem 4.4 through its elegiac Tarpeia focuses on the capture of Jupiter's home and the betrayal of the Roman people on the very day that they celebrate their city's birth. The elegiac Tarpeia, therefore, does not quite correspond to the initial topics of the first programmatic poem – Virgilian *Roma*, the weaponry of Caesar and the victorious arms of Troy reborn (4.1.46-7). Nor, however, does elegiac Tarpeia quite fit the subsequent commands to write about the military service of love, the erotic victories and defeats of a poet (4.1.135-40). But, like Arethusa, the vestal virgin does bring an erotic interest to military matters. Weapons, for example, when carried by a beloved take on a beauty associated in earlier poems with the features of a mistress (4.4.32). When Tarpeia expresses a desire to carry love into military camps (*in castra reponet amores* 4.4.37), she thus discloses the manner in which the elegiac woman implements a requirement of the fourth

book. The application of eroticism to military matters, the softening of weapons which Tarpeia describes as her goal (*mollire arma*), fulfils the poetic command to engage with the apparent polarities of *arma* and *amor*.

(iii) Acanthis and Cynthia

In the past, readings of the women of Propertian elegy frequently rested on a methodological inconsistency. Elegy's mistress and elegy's madam were not subjects of the same critical procedure. In the case of elegy's mistress, critics often recognized the literariness of the language in which she was shaped while nevertheless exploring ways to bring her out of the elegiac world and put her on the map of Augustan Rome. Then no matter how artificial the erotic discourse in which she appeared, no matter how often that discourse openly declared its debt to earlier traditions of erotic writing, the written Cynthia was still read as somehow disclosing the realities of a specific woman's life in Rome. Many critics operating in the Anglo-American tradition of classical scholarship now read the elegiac mistress as at least a *transposed* reflection or a *poetic* painting of an elegiac poet's Augustan girl-friend.[53] The elegiac madam, however, has always been subjected to a much closer critical scrutiny. And scarcely any attempt has been made to associate Acanthis, the old witch of Propertius' fourth book, with a specific living woman, even though the authorial narrator presents himself as a participant in the events of poem 4.5: he reports the advice Acanthis gave a young girl and curses her for the suffering it brought him.

It is, therefore, not the least bit contentious to suggest that this particular elegiac woman is a female fiction – a literary construct whose advice, whose alcoholism, whose magical powers, and even whose withered skin, are all products of cultural and generic conventions for writing. Nor is it particularly contentious to suggest that here the elegiac text even draws attention to its literary debts and the unreality of the events it purports to relate. Thus, it is agreed, the advice of Acanthis is framed by authorial curses familiar from Alexandrian epigram. The Propertian madam then hints at her own literary origin when she offers as an example of exemplary behaviour the pricey 'tart' of a Menandrian comedy (4.5.41-4) – two Tibullan poems (1.5 and 2.6) provide precursors for this transfer of comedy's bawd into elegiac narrative. And, finally, since the occasion of the madam's advice is left unclear, the impression is created not of a particular person but of a generalized figure – the madam of the comic stage has been brought again into an elegiac poem.[54] But why does she appear here for the first time in the Propertian corpus?

At the level of Roman cultural conventions, acceptable female sexuality is constrained within the institutions of marriage and motherhood. As neither wife nor mother, the old unmarried and childless woman then operates as a sign of the socially unacceptable, the entirely alien female. Displaced from a central position in cultural evaluations of the 'good' woman, the old spinster is associated with

social disruption.[55] So on entering the discourse of comedy, she may take on the dramatic role of a madam – the figure who attempts to subvert the values associated with marriage, who attempts to persuade a mistress not to demonstrate the sexual loyalty of a wife. In Plautus' *Mostellaria*, for example, the young man curses the white-haired maid when he overhears her advising his mistress against devotion to a single lover (190-202).

When the madam of the comic stage is then brought into the discourse of the Tibullan corpus, her arts are accordingly opposed to the interests of the authorial narrator. Erotic teaching is remodelled to suit the requirements of the elegiac genre. The madam appears briefly only to be cursed, and her role as teacher of the erotic arts is now usurped by the elegiac male who professes opposing principles. Thus, in the early books of the Propertian corpus, it is the authorial narrator who always plays the role of erotic expert, who places the joys of a single mutual love above any comic bawd's advocacy of worldly riches and multiple lovers, and who expresses a belief that it is not money but the power of his song which will win over his beloved.[56]

It therefore comes as a considerable surprise when a poem of Propertius' fourth book returns to the techniques of comedy by giving centre stage to the erotic advice of the withered madam Acanthis, while confining the lover's curses to the opening and closing sections of the elegiac narrative. Just as the elegiac Tarpeia's shameful tomb does not quite fulfil the initial proposal of book 4 to build an elegiac counterpart to the glories of Virgilian Rome, so the advice of the elegiac Acanthis does not quite fulfil the subsequent demand to return to the familiar amatory idiom of loyal erotic servitude. By transforming the comic madam into the elegiac woman who dominates poem 4.5, the poetic text instead takes on yet another narrative voice, another new subject position which casts to one side and undercuts the old Propertian fictions of the loyal lover and his beautiful mistress.

When the elegiac Acanthis holds the stage and delivers her disquisition on the art of gaining lovers, the break with earlier Propertian discourse – the departure from the stance of the Propertian narrator, the male 'I' of previous books – is clearly marked. In the second poem of the *Monobiblos*, the male narrator – the lover/poet – had questioned the value of adornment and the wearing of Coan silks in particular (1.2.1-6). So when Acanthis now advises that a girl select as lovers only the moneyed soldier, sailor or slave, but not the poet who brings verses rather than silk dresses (4.5.49-58), she not only inverts the authorial teachings contained in the first Propertian poetry-book but even singles out one particular passage on which to pour her scorn.[57] Moreover, if the text is not interpolated at this point, Acanthis even quotes the offending couplet and thus underlines a strategy of the fourth book – namely to challenge and change the erotic discourse of earlier books through the adoption of new, especially female, narrative voices.[58]

But the elegiac madam not only challenges the stance of the earlier authorial narrator, she also represents (within the requirements of erotic writing) the polar opposite of the elegiac mistress. Invectives against the old woman attribute to her perversions of a mistress' features. While the mistress inspires a catalogue of conventional beauty, the old woman compels a catalogue of conventional ugliness.[59] So, at the close of Propertius' third book, a farewell to the mistress Cynthia as subject of elegiac writing was effected through the denial of beauty and the prediction of the arrival of ugliness (3.24-5): mistress is transformed into hag. It is therefore entirely in keeping with the poetics of the fourth book that the familiar elegiac mistress is relegated to an insignificant spot in the landscape of poem 4.5 and that in the foreground should be placed an old wrinkled witch.

But then if the third book bid farewell to Cynthia as the subject of elegiac writing, why does she reappear in the seventh and eighth poems of the fourth book?

Written in the authorial first-person, poems 4.7 and 4.8 purport to be autobiographical narratives of a poet's liaison with his mistress. But the appearance of these two poems in the fourth book and their juxtaposition raises considerable difficulties for any readers who might still wish to take their few realist techniques for reality. At the end of the third book Cynthia was dismissed as material for Propertian poems. In poem 4.7 she comes back, but only as a ghost in a burnt dress. The narrator recalls how after her death Cynthia seemed to appear to him in a dream and speak through withered lips. And, in words which he reports directly, her ghost declares that she had been true to him till death. In the very next poem, however, Cynthia suddenly reappears alive and well and utterly faithless. Now the narrator tells the story of what happened tonight on the Esquiline: Cynthia returned from a jaunt on the Appian way to break up a party he had arranged in her absence and to restore her authority over him. We may well wonder how Cynthia manages to be so lively if she is dead in the previous poem.

The elegiac mistress and her depiction in earlier books has exercised such charm over readers of the Propertian corpus that in the past many felt able to declare her reality while nevertheless admitting the unreality of the elegiac madam. Those who read the Propertian corpus as a poetic biography of its author's love-affair were then compelled to offer solutions to the problem which the conjunction of poems 4.7 and 4.8 posed for them. So poem 4.8 was extracted from its apparently problematic position in the fourth book and then dated safely before Cynthia's dismissal. Similarly, readers were advised either that Cynthia was not *literally* dead at the time poem 4.7 was composed, that 'death' is just a means of satirizing the affair or, alternatively, that Cynthia was not *actually* alive at the time poem 4.8 was composed, that 'tonight' is just poetic licence – a means of giving dramatic immediacy to the recollection of old experiences.[60]

But the problem does not arise at all when it is recognized that the elegiac mistress is as much a fiction as the elegiac madam, that even Cynthia is a literary construct whose life or death, whose loyalty or faithlessness, whose beauty or ugliness, are all determined by cultural conventions and poetic programmes. And at this point in the Propertian corpus, the text itself seems to encourage precisely that recognition.

Cynthia's return to the map of the elegiac world has already been heralded in the first poem of the fourth book when the astrologer Horos qualifies the initial ambitious schemes for elegiac writing by commanding a return to the older amatory idioms. But why should her return be delayed until half-way through the book? Significantly, the sequence of poems 4.6 and 4.7 seems to come closest to fulfilling the conflicting requirements of the initial poem. An aetion which concerns itself with the Palatine temple of Apollo, which takes as its theme the reputation of Augustus and which describes (however curiously) Apollo's contribution to the victory at Actium clearly constructs a grand elegiac monument to Virgil's *Aeneid* 8.[61] Moreover, Cynthia's retrospective account of the elegiac love-affair draws on many themes of the earliest Propertian poetry-books, and recalls in particular poem 1.3 where once before she had been provided with direct speech in which to call attention to her loyalty and her lover's negligence.[62] Thus within the architecture of the last poetry-book, Cynthia's reinstatement as a practice of writing seems to occur not because an author's love for his mistress has been rekindled, but because his poetics of polarity requires it.

The relationship between poems 4.7 and 4.8 further demonstrates that even the elegiac mistress of the fourth book is shaped to suit its bipolar poetics and that even the two Cynthia-centred poems engage with the interplay of the aetiological and amatory, epic and elegy, *arma* and *amor*. After the Cynthia-centred discourse of poem 4.7, poem 4.8 begins with a grand antiquarian exposition of Juno's fertility rites at Lanuvium as if to continue the superficial yet regular alternation between aetiological and amatory elegies which has proved to be a poetic principle operating up to this point in the fourth book. But then poem 4.8 becomes largely concerned with the comic antics of a vengeful mistress. The dynamics of the fourth book therefore changes *within* rather than between poems. And it is Cynthia herself who bridges any apparent divide between these two levels of elegiac discourse – for her headlong ride down the Appian way even appears to match local depictions of the cult's patron goddess.[63]

Moreover, poems 4.7 and 4.8 incorporate into their elegiac narratives material from a wide variety of genres whose interplay both disturbs any surface semblance of reality and challenges the polarity between *arma* and *amor* with which the fourth book began. The two poems which momentarily restore the mistress to her old place at the centre of the elegiac map of Rome, like the earlier poems which depict an elegiac woman, also position their discourse ambiguously between the new ambitions and the old restrictions of the book's bipolar programme.

If poems 4.7 and 4.8 together observe an unrealistic narrative sequence in which a dead Cynthia is immediately followed by a living Cynthia, it is because the fourth book pairs an elegiac *Iliad* with an elegiac *Odyssey*. Several studies have detailed the ways in which the two Cynthias of the fourth book are shaped as elegiac counterparts of Homeric heroes. Echoes of *Iliad* 23 at strategic points in the narrative of poem 4.7 establish a parallel for Cynthia's ghost in the Homeric Patroclus who appears to Achilles in a dream and complains of his forgetfulness. Echoes of *Odyssey* 22 in poem 4.8 establish a parallel for the vengeful Cynthia in the Homeric Odysseus who returns home to rout the suitors and be reunited with Penelope. So in pursuit of the programme of a Roman Callimachus – the production of an elegiac counterpart to epic – poem 4.8 stands in relation to poem 4.7 as *Odyssey* to *Iliad*.[64]

Paradoxically then, it is the Cynthia-centred pair of poems which take on the greatest literary challenge set by Virgil – to produce Roman poetic counterparts for whole Homeric episodes. And, as we might anticipate, there are fundamental and humorous generic differences between those epic narratives and the apparent transformation of the elegiac mistress into both Homeric and Virgilian hero. For example, although the ghostly Cynthia of poem 4.7 returns from the underworld to demand a fitting burial in the manner of the Homeric Patroclus, the circumstances in which she claims to have been precipitated there bear all the hallmarks of a comic plot complete with poisonings, rivals and the threatened torture of cunning slaves. It is as a result of domestic and erotic dispute, not public and heroic battle, that the elegiac mistress has died. Similarly, although the triumphant Cynthia of poem 4.8 returns home in the manner of the Homeric Odysseus to overcome and cast out those who would usurp her rightful place, she returns not from years of trials on land and sea but from a day's amorous outing, and arrives to confront not the court of a king but a gathering of courtesans, dwarfs and drunks quite suited to the comic stage. The language of militarism, of epic triumphs and cities sacked, is here applied to domestic brawls and bedroom battles.[65]

The close of poem 4.8, in particular, demonstrates the often playful manner in which the Cynthia-centred poems fulfil the fourth book's poetic project. The lover's final capitulation to his vengeful mistress unites within a single line the poetic themes which the first poem had polarized: *respondi, et toto soluimus arma toro* (4.8.88). But the conjunction of *arma/toro* and the words *respondi* and *soluimus arma* bring into play obscene possibilities, because the Latin language abounds in military metaphors for sexual acts.[66] Here, as befits the employment of an elegiac mistress to effect the reconciliation of two apparently disparate poetics, the elegiac conjunction of *arma* and *toro* carries with it the humorous overtones of a discourse on *militia mentulae*.

The poem which follows 4.8 also tells the story of a hero's arrival at Rome and clearly complements the narrative strategies of the preceding poem. In poem 4.8 the *elegiac* mistress Cynthia is provided with incongruous *epic* attributes, while in poem 4.9 the *epic*, and notably Virgilian, hero Hercules is provided with incongruous *elegiac* attributes – he has dressed himself up as a soft girl like elegy's mistresses and has begged for entry into a woman's house like elegy's excluded lovers.[67] Such generic incongruities suit the narrative of a poet who plays the role of an ever changing Vertumnus, while their evident patterning casts serious doubts on the authenticity of the elegiac mistress. For the patterned interplay of *arma* and *amor* which the sequence 4.6-9 effects (both within and between poems) locates 4.7 and 4.8 squarely within the architecture of the fourth book and thus denies a realistic chronology to Cynthia.

The narrative strategies of the fourth book reveal that elegy's mistress as well as elegy's madam is a female fiction shaped to suit a poetic programme. And thus to balance the critique of early Propertian elegy delivered by the dying Acanthis on one side of the central Actium poem, the dead Cynthia on the other demands that all Cynthia-centred verse be immediately burnt (4.7.77-8).

(iv) Cornelia

What then of the last woman to be placed on the elegiac map of Rome? At this point in the narrative of the fourth book we might think it both safe and appropriate to match the text's elegiac woman closely with the realities of a specific individual's life in Augustan society. For poem 4.11 concerns itself with the conduct of Cornelia, the step-daughter of Augustus who died in 16 B.C., and no attempt is made to disguise the historical identity of the woman who is the poem's subject. For a moment, the pathway between written and living woman seems comfortably clear of obstacles such as cultural codes, generic conventions or poetic programmes. So poem 4.11 has been read by at least one critic not as a cornerstone in the architecture of a poetry-book, but as one of two commissioned works around which a number of disparate poetic pieces have been loosely clustered. The elegiac Cornelia then becomes an isolatable tribute (whether warm or cool) to a patron's wife.[68]

However, unlike the earlier Propertian elegy on the death of Marcellus (3.18), poem 4.11 does not have the structure of an authorial comment on an untimely death. Set in a Virgilian underworld, recalling the tragedy of a Euripidean heroine and presented in its entirety as Cornelia's own words to the judges of the dead, the poem does not encourage an easy transition from text to extra-textual realities. Continuing the innovatory character of the fourth book and the treatment of female subjects which such innovation requires, the elegiac Cornelia's account of her life plays with a number of literary forms.[69] When she begins by addressing her husband from the grave, the poem both recalls the structure of monumental epigrams, in which the dead person is envisaged as speaking from the tomb, and casts the weeping husband in the role of elegy's excluded lover. When the poem adopts the structure of actual funeral orations and court defences, the Propertian Cornelia is found to be speaking in Virgil's underworld. And when the text reproduces the conventional patterns of consolations, it also takes on the tragic dimensions of the farewell to her husband delivered by the Euripidean Alcestis.[70] The literariness of the elegy's language, the artificiality of its structure, and the debt it owes to a range of generic conventions for writing about the dead, together set up a considerable distance between the elegiac Cornelia and the realities of a woman's life and death in Augustan Rome. Like Vertumnus, and like the first elegiac woman of the fourth book, the Propertian Cornelia is clearly articulated as a work of art, a form of writing undertaken by a poet which fulfils and now completes the ambiguous, bipartite programme of a poetry-book.

First of all, this elegiac woman is given a voice at a significant position in the architecture of the fourth book. The sequence of poems 4.7-10 – two poems centred on Cynthia, two on the cults of gods – raises no expectations as to the character of the final poem. The juxtaposition of a poem on the *arma* of past Roman commanders (4.10) with one where Roman commanders figure only as the relations of the female narrator (4.11) might suggest that the last poem will focus predominantly on *amor*. But, whether imagined as sustaining a pyramid or a panel structure, the first, central and last poems provide a framework for the Propertian narrative by, for example, marking the only three points where the name *Caesar* appears.[71] So, befitting the organizational role of the last poem, the naming of the Princeps and the articulation of grand themes at strategic points in the fourth book, the last elegiac woman is very far removed from the figure of the mistress, the main female subject of previous poetry-books. Elsewhere, the figure of the matron is even opposed to the figure of the mistress as the appropriate subject for an elegiac poet. So when Ovid describes an encounter with two styles of writing in female form, the accepted elegiac genre is characterized as a *meretrix*, the rejected genre as a *matrona*.[72] In the last poem of Propertius' innovatory fourth book, however, the subject of elegiac writing is precisely a Roman matron: a wife, a mother and a member of the patrician aristocracy.

In Roman society, marriage, motherhood and membership of a *familia* order the female in socially effective terms.[73] So positive evaluations of woman centre on her as daughter, sister, wife and mother. But when poem 4.11 reproduces these entirely conventional categories and evaluations of the character of a good woman, it also distinguishes the new and final female narrator from the unorthodox male, the narrative 'I' of previous books. Now the female narrator Cornelia estimates her worth partly by the military victories of her male ancestors (4.11.29-30), while the earlier authorial narrator had considered ancestral triumphs of little importance compared to the joys of lording it over girls at dinner-parties (2.34.55-8). Now, too, the Propertian Cornelia estimates her worth

by her fidelity to a single husband and gives voice to the ideal of Roman womanhood when she asks for the expression *uni nupta* to be engraved on her tombstone (4.11.36). Earlier in the corpus the male lover had appropriated such conventional phrases to declare sexual loyalty to a single mistress and, therefore, an ideological unorthodoxy (2.7.19 and 2.13.35-6).[74] The last narrator of the fourth book also claims honour for her fertility, her production of three children (4.11.61-70), while the earlier authorial narrator had explicitly rejected his civic duty to have children and thereby assist the state in the provision of a new generation of soldiers (2.7.13-14). Thus the Propertian Cornelia's survey of a good woman's life restores the values of loyalty, constancy and chastity to their traditional context – that of marriage rather than the elegiac love-affair.

The introduction of the ideology of the good woman into the elegiac text thus facilitates the project of the opening sequence of the first poem – the extension of the dimensions of elegiac writing and the departure from earlier elegiac practice into grander themes. Since that ideology organizes the female according to her relations with the male, it also permits poem 4.11 to close the poetry-book with themes which match its opening. It permits the good Cornelia as daughter, sister, wife and mother of public figures to detail the military achievements of Rome's past and to address Rome directly as witness to her rectitude.[75] It even permits the fourth book to close with Augustus in the character of a god (4.11.57-60).

So a new subject position, a new narrative voice, is adopted which changes the old poetic idioms and challenges the old poetic fictions of the unorthodox elegiac lover and his amoral mistress. Furthermore, the last elegiac woman of the Propertian corpus is also the furthest removed from the figure of the mistress. As a wife, the elegiac Arethusa constituted a departure from the beloved mistress Cynthia. As a legendary vestal virgin, Tarpeia set the elegiac discourse in which she was shaped even further away from the personal erotic themes of earlier poems. But the idiom of *amor militis*, the erotic perspective imposed upon military matters, nevertheless lent the representations of Arethusa and Tarpeia the colour of earlier more personalized male passions. The elegiac Cornelia never speaks in such terms.[76]

However, it is not just the initial, grand themes of the poetry-book which poem 4.11 balances and complements. The central poem of the fourth book effected an abrupt transition from public to private, martial to sympotic poetic roles by utilizing a recognized polarity in the attributes of the god of poetry Apollo.[77] The first poem effected a dramatic conflict between public and private poetic roles by juxtaposing, through distinct narrators, two apparently conflicting poetic creeds, extracted from the polemics of Callimachus.[78] The last poem, however, exploits aspects of the cultural coding of the *matrona* and the conventions of writing about the dead to redefine conflicts between the public and the private, the glorious and the sorrowful, in the practice of poetic production.

The Roman *matrona* is herself located ambiguously between domestic and political, public and private space.[79] So a poem which is presented as her own words allows only the partial intrusion of warfare and civic responsibility onto the elegiac map of Rome. Through the elegiac Cornelia a generic difference between the epic style of writing and the Propertian practice continues to be expressed. An epic narrative would have concerned itself directly with the military prowess and magisterial careers of Cornelia's male relatives. Instead the terminology of male civic responsibility is incorporated into the sphere of the female. For the elegiac Cornelia's speech shapes her as orator, magistrate and triumphant general.[80]

Similarly, brought into an elegiac depiction of untimely death, the ideological alignment of the *matrona* with the private, as well as the public, facilitates the revision of the *Aeneid* in elegy and permits the exclusion of its heroic colouring. For the elegiac Cornelia is set in an infernal landscape which forms only a fragment of the underworld in the continuous narrative of Virgil's sixth book. As a woman's speech awaiting sentence before the judges of the dead, poem 4.11 is frozen both in time and in place. There cannot be a progression to Elysium, to the Virgilian disquisition on the joys of rebirth and the survey of Rome's great heroes.[81] The god Caesar remains forever in tears, forever mourning the loss of a companion worthy of his daughter (4.11.59-60).

Finally, on becoming an elegiac woman, the *matrona* Cornelia gains features which associate her paradoxically with the *meretrix* Cynthia. Poem 4.11 is a recognized companion piece to poem 4.7. Both comprise speeches delivered by a woman from beyond the grave who declares her devotion to one man, classifies herself among the great women of myth or history and delivers instructions on the care of her household now that she is dead.[82] Thus, not least when it suggests parallels between a *matrona* and a *meretrix*, the final poem of the fourth book succeeds where the first had failed in amalgamating the simple categories of public and private, martial and amatory, styles of elegiac writing.

The last poem of the corpus teaches yet another important lesson on how to read the elegiac woman. For if the female appears everywhere organized in relation to the male, if Cornelia's daughter is said to be a token or symbol of her father's public career (4.11.67), then a written woman is also a token or symbol of her author's practice of writing. So when the last poem of the last book of the Propertian corpus ends with a woman waiting for a response from her judges, it ends also with an author waiting for a response from his readers.

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NOTES

1. I would like to thank Richard Hunter and the *PCPS* reader for their helpful criticisms of this paper.

2. See e.g. H. P. Foley (ed.), *Reflections of women in antiquity* (1981).

3. M. Wyke, 'Reading female flesh: *Amores* 3.1', in Averil Cameron (ed.), *History as text* (forthcoming).

4. J. P. Hallett, 'The role of women in Roman elegy: counter-cultural feminism', *Arethusa* 6 (1973) 103-24.

5. For these characteristics of the third Propertian poetry-book see e.g. F. Solmsen, 'Propertius and Horace', *CP* 43 (1948) 105-9; M. Hubbard, *Propertius* (1974) 68-115; M. C. J. Putnam, 'Propertius' third book: patterns of cohesion', *Arethusa* 13 (1980) 97-113.

6. G. Williams, *Tradition and originality in Roman poetry* (1968) 480-95; J. A. Barsby, 'The composition and publication of the first three books of Propertius', *G & R* 21 (1974) 128-37; Putnam (1980) 108-10.

7. On the new characteristics of the fourth book and its two poetic programmes see W. A. Camps, *Propertius elegies book iv* (1965) 1-6; H. E. Pillinger, 'Some Callimachean influences on Propertius book 4', *HSCPh* 73 (1969) 171-99; J. Van Sickle, 'Propertius (*uates*): Augustan ideology, topography and poetics in elegy IV, 1', *Dialoghi di Archeologia* 8 (1974) 116-45; Hubbard (n. 5) 116-56; C. W. Macleod, 'Propertius 4, 1', *PLLS* 1 (1976) 141-53; J. F. Miller, 'Callimachus and the Augustan aetiological elegy', *ANRW* 30.1 (1982) 371-417; H-P. Stahl, *Propertius: 'love' and 'war'* (1985) 248-305.

8. Putnam (n. 5).

9. W. R. Nethercut, 'Recent scholarship on Propertius', *ANRW* 30.3 (1983) 1849-50 explores the similarities rather than the differences between the narrative fluctuations of books 3 and 4.

10. P. Fedeli, *Properzio elegie libro iv* (1965) xxii and xxx, for example, appears to concur with Postgate's original view that book 4 is a posthumous work.

11. See e.g. Hubbard (n. 5) 116-18 following Dieterich.

12. The history of claims for book 4's cohesiveness is conveniently set out by W. R. Nethercut, 'Notes on the structure of Propertius book 4', *AJPh* 89 (1968) 449-64. For a more recent discussion see G. O. Hutchinson, 'Propertius and the unity of the book', *JRS* 74 (1984) 100-3.

13. See E. C. Marquis, 'Vertumnus in Propertius 4,2', *Hermes* 102 (1974) 491-500; P. Pinotti, 'Properzio e Vertumno: anticonformismo e restaurazione Augustea', *Colloquium Propertianum* III, Accademia Properziana del Subasio-Assisi, (1983) 75-96.

14. For Propertius' poetic treatment of marriage generally see S. Lilja, *The Roman elegists' attitude to women* (1965) 230-9.

15. As P. Fedeli, *Properzio. Il libro terzo delle elegie* (1985) 213 and cf. Prop. 1.3.41.

16. See R. Maltby, 'Love and marriage in Propertius 4,3', *PLLS* 3 (1981) 243-7.

17. Suet. *Div. Aug.* 64. See G. Williams, 'Some aspects of Roman marriage ceremonies and ideals', *JRS* 48 (1958) 21 n. 20 and N. Purcell, 'Livia and the womanhood of Rome', *PCPS* 212 (1986) 94. Cf.

R. M. Ogilvie, *A commentary on Livy books 1-5* (1965) 222 on Livy's wool-working Lucretia, and J. H. Dee, 'Arethusa to Lycotas: Propertius 4,3', *TAPhA* 104 (1974) 88 on Propertius' Arethusa.

18. Cf. Dee (n. 17) 83.

19. For the elegiac metaphor of *militia amoris* see R. J. Baker, '*Miles annosus*: the military motif in Propertius', *Latomus* 27 (1968) 322-49 and P. Murgatroyd, '*Militia amoris* and the Roman elegists', *Latomus* 34 (1975) 59-79.

20. See M. B. Arthur, 'The divided world of *Iliad* VI' and C. G. Perkell, 'On Creusa, Dido, and the quality of victory in Virgil's *Aeneid*' in Foley (n. 2) 19-44 and 355-77. For Greek tragedy's alignment of the sexes inside and outside the house cf. F. I. Zeitlin, 'The dynamics of misogyny: myth and mythmaking in the *Oresteia*', *Arethusa* 11 (1978) 149-81.

21. Dee (n. 17) 81-2 notes the oppositions in poem 4.3 between Rome/abroad, domestic/military, female/male.

22. The comparison with *Aeneid* 8.585-93 is made by D. Little, 'Politics in Augustan poetry', *ANRW* 30.1 (1982) 303.

23. E. Fraenkel, *Horace* (1957) 288-91 discloses more ominous tones in the sympotic last stanzas.

24. Livy 1.57-9 and see Ogilvie (n. 17) 218-20.

25. Tib. 1.10.1-6 and cf. Tib. 1.3.1-56. For the relation of this outburst and Arethusa's subsequent complaints to the topoi of elegiac erotic writing see Dee (n. 17).

26. Lycotas, for example, has *teneros lacertos* (4.3.23) while Cynthia has *pedibus teneris* (1.8.7).

27. As in Prop. 3.8.

28. Lilja (n. 14) 234-5 observes that in 4.3 marriage is depicted in the same colours as elegiac affairs.

29. See Dee (n. 17) 87 and Fedeli (n. 15) 127, and cf. Prop. 4.3.31-2 with the restlessness of the Ovidian lover in *Am.* 1.2.2.

30. See e.g. Little (n. 22) 301-3.

31. M. Rothstein, *Propertius Sextus Elegien* ed. 3, vol. 2 (1966) 229 took Lycotas to be a translation of the Latin name Lupercus found at Prop. 4.1.93 and was supported by P. Grimal, 'Les intentions de Properce et la composition du livre IV des élégies', *Collection Latomus* 12 (1953) 8. Fedeli (n. 15) 119 thought a connection with the Postumus of 3.12 more probable.

32. M. C. J. Putnam, *Virgil's pastoral art: studies in the Eclogues* (1970) 344-5. M. Hubbard (n. 5) 142-5 notes that the Greek names probably have pastoral connotations. Lycotas reappears as a defender of rural values in Calp. Sic. *Ecl.* 7.

33. H. Jacobson, *Ovid's Heroides* (1974) 319-48.

34. Pillinger (n. 7) 174-8; Miller (n. 7) 380-1.

35. Cf., on Ovid's *Heroides*, J. Henderson, 'Becoming a heroine (1st): Penelope's Ovid', *LCM* 11 (1986) 7-10, 21-4 and 37-40.

36. As Dee (n. 17) 96.

37. B. W. Boyd, 'Tarpeia's tomb: a note on Propertius 4.4', *AJP* 105 (1984) 85.

38. For the Callimachean character of poem 4.4 see e.g. Miller (n. 7) 371-85.

39. As noted by Fedeli (n. 15) 137.

40. K. Wellesley, 'Propertius' Tarpeia poem (IV.4)', *Acta Classica Univ. Scient. Debrecen.* 5 (1969) 96 and cf. Boyd (n. 37) 86.

41. E.g. Grimal (n. 31) 25-8; Baker (n. 19) 342-4; P. Pinotti, 'Sulle fonti e le intenzioni di Properzio IV 4', *Giornale Italiano di Filologia* NS 5 (1974) 21-7.

42. Ogilvie (n. 17) 64-78.

43. Pinotti (n. 41) 18. Cf. A. S. Hollis, *Ovid. Metamorphoses book viii* (1970) 34.

44. Ogilvie (n. 17) 74-5. Cf. Pinotti (n. 41) 18-19.

45. Hollis (n. 43) 32.

46. Pinotti (n. 41) *passim*. Adrian Hollis has suggested to me that a specific model for the Tarpeia narrative may lie in the tale told in Ap. Rhod. fr. 12 (Powell) to which the elegist might have had access via Parthenius' *Narr. Amat.* 21.

47. Hubbard (n. 5) 119-20 and F. E. Brenk, 'Tarpeia among the Celts: watery romance, from Simylos to Propertius', C. Deroux (ed.), *Studies in Latin literature and Roman history* 1, Collection Latomus 164 (1979) 166-74.

48. Grimal (n. 31) 35.

49. On Greek society cf. J. Gould, 'Women in Classical Athens', *JHS* 100 (1980) 54.

50. Varro *LL* 5.41. Cf. Ogilvie (n. 17) 74-5.

51. M. Beard, 'The sexual status of vestal virgins', *JRS* 70 (1980) 16.

52. See J. Warden, 'Another would-be Amazon: Propertius 4,4,71-72', *Hermes* 106 (1978) 177-87.

53. For criticism of even this revised reading see esp. P. Veyne, *L'élégie érotique romaine: l'amour, la poésie et l'occident* (1983). Cf. M. Wyke, 'Written women: Propertius' scripta puella', *JRS* 77 (1987) forthcoming.

54. E. Courtney, 'Three poems of Propertius', *BICS* 16 (1969) 80-7; G. Puccioni, 'L'elegia IV 5 di Properzio' in *Studi di poesia latina in onore di Antonio Traglia* vol. 2 (1979) 609-23; Hubbard (n. 5) 137-42; J. Barsby, *Ovid Amores I* (1979) 90-107.

55. A. Richlin, 'Invective against women in Roman satire', *Arethusa* 17 (1984) 67-80 and *The Garden of Priapus: Sexuality and Aggression in Roman Humour* (1983) 109-16.

56. A. L. Wheeler, 'Erotic teaching in Roman elegy and the Greek sources. Part I', *CPh* 5 (1910) 440-50; 'Erotic teaching in Roman elegy and the Greek sources. Part 2', *CPh* 6 (1911) 56-77; 'Propertius as *praeceptor amoris*', *CPh* 5 (1910) 28-40.

57. Wheeler (n. 56) catalogues the differences between the *praecepta* of Acanthis and those of the earlier male narrator.

58. See Veyne (n. 53) 74. But for the rejection of vv. 55-6 from the text of Prop. 4.5 see, most recently, S. J. Heyworth, 'Notes on Propertius, books III and IV', CQ n.s. 36 (1986) 209-10.

59. See e.g. Richlin (n. 55) 69-72.

60. For a comment on such views see J. H. Dee, 'Elegy 4.8: a Propertian comedy', *TAPhA* 108 (1978) 41-53 and J. Warden, *Fallax opus: poet and reader in the elegies of Propertius* (1980) 78-81.

61. See e.g. Pillinger (n. 7) 189-99.

62. As Warden (n. 60) 72.

63. Hubbard (n. 5) 115 and cf. Warden (n. 60) 150.

64. S. Evans, 'Odyssean echoes in Propertius IV.8', *G & R* 18 (1971) 51-3; H. MacL. Currie, 'Propertius IV.8 – a reading', *Latomus* 32 (1973) 616-22; F. Muecke, '*Nobilis historia*? Incongruity in Propertius 4.7', *BICS* 21 (1974) 124-32; Hubbard (n. 5) 149-56; J. W. Allison, 'Virgilian themes in Propertius 4.7 and 8', *CPh* 75 (1980) 332-8; Warden (n. 60) 13-61; A. Dalzell, 'Homeric themes in Propertius', *Hermathena* 129 (1980) 33-5.

65. In addition to the above see Dee (n. 17) and J. M. McKeown, 'Augustan elegy and mime', *PCPS* 205 (1979) 74-8.

66. See J. N. Adams, *The Latin sexual vocabulary* (1982) 14-21 and 145-59.

67. W. S. Anderson, 'Hercules exclusus: Propertius iv.9', *AJPh* 85 (1964) 1-12; J. Warden, 'Epic into elegy: Propertius 4.9.70f', *Hermes* 110 (1982) 228-47.

68. Hubbard (n. 5) 116-8.

69. Pillinger (n. 7) 174-8.

70. In addition to the commentators see e.g. L. C. Curran, 'Propertius 4.11: Greek heroines and death', *CPh* 63 (1968) 134-9; G. Paduano, 'Le reminiscenze dell' Alcesti nell'elegia IV. 11 di Properzio', *Maia* 20 (1968) 21-8; Hubbard (n. 5) 145-9; Warden (n. 60) 103.

71. W. R. Nethercut, 'Notes on the structure of Propertius, book IV', *AJP* 89 (1968) 449-64. Cf. Grimal (1953).

72. See Wyke (n. 53) forthcoming.

73. See e.g. J. F. Gardner, *Women in Roman law and society* (1986).

74. Williams (n. 17) 23-5. Cf. Hallett (n. 4) 111.

75. As Hutchinson (n. 12) 102.

76. Lilja (n. 14) 233-7 makes comparable observations on the difference between the portraits of Arethusa and Cornelia.

77. Pillinger (n. 7) 189-99.

78. Van Sickle (n. 7) 121-2.

79. See Purcell (n. 17) for the anomalous movement of Livia right out into the public sphere.

80. Curran (n. 70) 134-5.

81. Cf. Curran (n. 70) 136.

82. See esp. D. K. Lange, 'Cynthia and Cornelia; two voices from the grave', in Deroux (n. 47) 335-42.

PROPERTIUS 4.5, OVID AMORES 1.6 AND ROMAN COMEDY[1]

'The absence of Roman comedy ... from the influences which the [Augustan] poets like to name proves only that they were not creditable, not in fashion, not that they had made no contribution.' So Jasper Griffin in his recent book on the Roman poets.[2] Griffin observes that scholars have been deterred from postulating Roman comic influence on the Augustan poets merely by the 'magisterial pronouncements of the great scholars', and he amasses considerable circumstantial evidence to support his theory that the Augustan poets, and especially the elegists, were indeed indebted to Roman comedy.[3] He observes, for example, that Cicero provides evidence for the continuing popularity of Roman drama; that (a very important point) Horace complains of the popularity of the Roman comedians whom 'powerful Rome learns by heart' (*Epist.* 2.1.60-1); that the same poet, despite his denigration of Roman comedy, obviously knew and referred to it;[4] that Roman comedy seems to be the source, or a source, for the 'naughtiness' of elegy and the rejection of traditional Roman values (with the comic *amatores* distressed by contemporary *mores* and the elegists flouting them);[5] that if the elegists do not acknowledge their debt to the Roman comic poets, then no more does Horace in the *Odes* acknowledge his manifest indebtedness to Hellenistic poetry, claiming instead to be following Sappho and Alcaeus.

This is all very convincing, but the evidence remains circumstantial. It tells us, essentially, that the elegists are likely to have been acquainted with Plautus, Terence and the other authors of Roman comedy, either from reading them or from seeing performances of the plays, or from both, and that we should not take too seriously the claims put forward by Roman authors to be following a particular literary tradition. One can, indeed, add to the circumstantial evidence. Elaine Fantham has recently observed that when Propertius and Ovid refer to Menander what they refer to is not 'the subtle family dramas pregnant with misunderstandings, which we value in *Epitrepontes* or *Samia*, but only the standard features of a comedy of deception.'[6] In other words, they are perhaps less familiar with the doyen of New Comedy than has previously been assumed. But knowing Roman comedy is not the same as using it or being influenced by it. However, it is possible to go a step further, and demonstrate by an examination of the language of the elegists (at least that of Propertius and Ovid), especially when they are dealing with comic themes, that they really are indebted to the *Roman* comic poets. One does this by pointing to words or expressions used by

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